# PREMENADE

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK LORE

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AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE GROUP

MARGOT MAYO

LEADER

"PROMENADE"

Official organ of the American Square-Dance Group. "The purpose of the American Square-Dance Group shall be to make available those rich stores of native dance, music, drama and general Americana which together comprise American folk-culture; to conduct such activities without regard for race, creed, color or social position; to cooperate with those who hold similar views."

- A S-D G Constitution

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## TWO DOWN AND TWO TO GO

Since we are very proud of our newly-released Decca records, and since we believe that they are really different from other square-dance records, I thought you might like to know what these albums are like.

"The Running Set" (Decca, #274), first of the two already released, consists of three ten-inch records with calls. We constantly kept in mind the needs of dancers in making these recordings, so we used only simple figures on the first disc; then on each successive side we added more figures, until the last combines all the figures previously used into one fast-moving dance. We hope this method will prove of value to beginners and to folks putting on parties where the guests are unfamiliar with this type of American folk dance.

The second album to be released, "Longways Sets" (Decca,#275), contains dances from the New England States which are danced in two lines, as in the Virginia Reel, which is included in this album along with "The Tempest", "Boston Fancy","Fireman's Dance", "Money Musk", and "Hull's Victory".

The music used is made up of the tunes I have collected from fiddlers, banjo-pickers, and square-dance bands around the Kentucky and Tennessee mountains and around New England, and includes "Soldier's Joy","Sourwood Mountain", and many other old favorites.

As far as we know these are the only records made by and for dancers; we had our group at the studio, dancing during the recording, so we know the timing is right and the tempo comfortable. The calls are as authentic as the music, and the descriptive booklet tells just how to do the figures. We will apreciate any suggestions, criticisms, or suggestions for future recordings.

P.S. Our next two albums will be "Quadrilles" and "Play-Party Games".

# SHOOT THE BUFFALO

Rockwood, Tennessee

Formation: Square Set

Music: Any Southern tune in 4/4 time, like "Old Joe Clark", "Cripple Creek", etc.

| Calls: | Description: |
| --- | --- |
| First couple off to the right | |
| All couples ready to shoot the Buffalo | |
| Shoot the Buffalo high | First and second couple advance towards each other with inside hands joined, head couple raises their hands and the second passes under. |
| Shoot him low | Both couples turn around, keeping inside hands joined; couple one passes under the raised arms of two |
| Swing your partner cause you shot the Buffalo | Both couples swing partners |
| Ring up four and dance some more | Circle four with the same couple; Then either do-si-do by walking around opposite lady and then around partners, or balance by taking a step forward and back, first to corners and then to partners. |
| On to the next and hunt the Buffalo | Same figures as above, with only a change in the call. |
| Home Swing. | |

(Repeat for all couples in turn)

# CHICKEN REEL

Formation: Square Set (Collected at New Milford,Conn.)

Music: "Chicken Reel"

Calls:

Right hand to your partner
And a Grand Right and Left

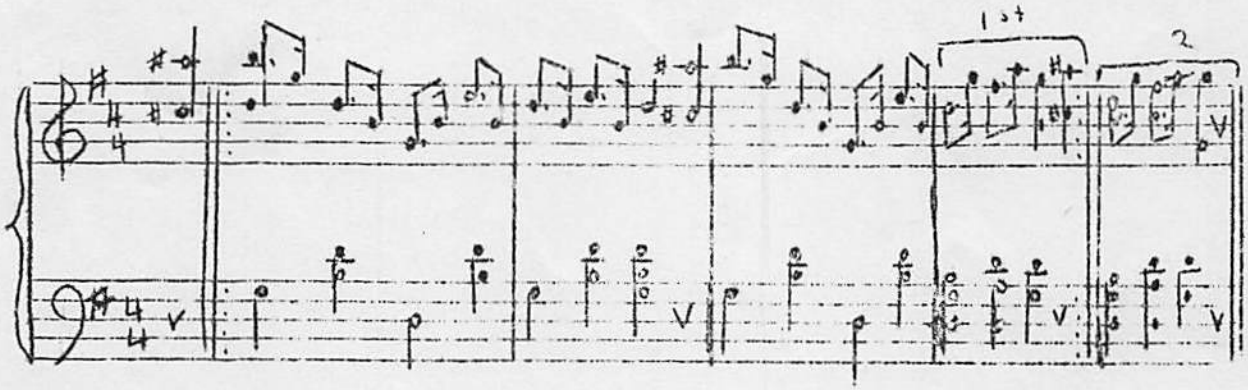
Right hand to your partners
Left hand to your corners
Elbow Swing your partners
Elbow swing your corners
Do-si-do your partners
Do-si-do your corners
Balance your partners
Swing your corners
Promenade

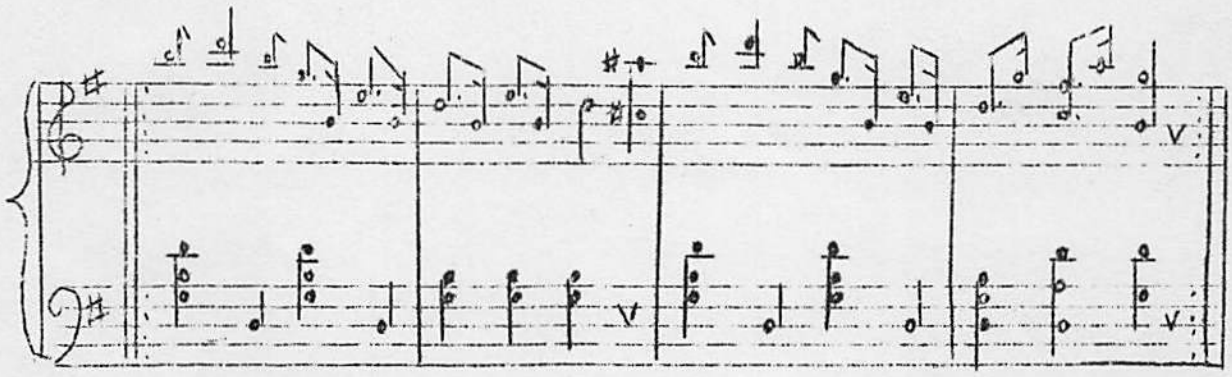
Description: Each gent faces his partner, joins right hands with her, passes her, dropping hands, joins left hands with the next lady, and so on, alternating hands until he reaches his original place. Partners join right hands and turn once around. Corners join left hands and turn once around. Partners link right elbows and turn once around. Corners link left elbowsand turn once around. Partners face each other and move around one another, passing right shoulder to right shoulder, and backwards into place. Corners face each other and pass around one another with the left shoulder, and backwards into place. Partners face each other and balance, first stepping on the right foot, swinging the left foot across in front of the right leg, then stepping on the left foot, swinging the right foot in front of the left leg. This is then repeated. Corners face each other and swing in ballroom position. All promenade around the set to the gent's place, so that each gent has a new partner on his right, the lady who was previously his corner. The dance is repeated until each lady is back to her original place. To end the dance, all honor partners.

Note: This is one of the few dances we have run across where the step-hop is used throughout the dance: step first on the right foot, hop on the same foot,then step on the left and hop on it.

# CHICKEN REEL

(arranged by Hannah Gordon)



This is perhaps one of the best known of all our American dance tunes. The piano arrangement given here is merely a skeleton-arrangement. Please feel free to add your own embellishments.

"Western Square Dances"
by
Ralph J. McNair

Oran V. Siler Co. pub. —— Denver, Colorado

Mr. McNair's book serves a twofold purpose in that it is valuable not only to the teacher and more advanced student of folk-dancing but, most important, to the layman to whom it arouses an intense desire to learn more dances and become really proficient.

The makeup of the book is as follows:

First there is an all inclusive table of contents, next a list of illustrations, an introduction to the dance itself, a discussion of thirty dances with explanations, a music supplement, and an index.

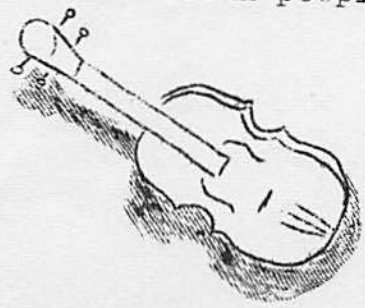
The illustrations are really the best part of the entire book. All couples are the same throughout and are named according to their positions in the set. The first couple consists of Andy and Amy,-second couple, Bill and Bess,-Cal and Cora are the third couple, and Dan and Dot the fourth. All explanations are done using these names, and the illustrations serve to doubly insure the reader of understanding the figures.

In the introduction, the positions are explained first, and then the calls. The author also tells here what instruments are best suited for square dancing and the types of music to play. He then discusses the role of the caller, and offers helpful suggestions of how to influence the participants in order to give them the fullest possible enjoyment from the dancing. Less important are the descriptions of the clothes to wear and the hall to be used.

The book includes some thirty Western square dances speckled with amusing little pictures which tend to add spice and color. These also keep it informal and thus different from the ordinary technical dance book.

After the dances, Mr. McNair gives the music of six songs that may be used for the dancing, and also recommends eight other songs, leaving it up to the reader to have the interest to look up and learn the music from other sources.

With the attractive silhouette on the cover of a couple swinging, to first draw the reader's eye, and the very large store of material included in its one hundred and twenty-six pages, I believe that this book can and will do much to further the knowledge and interest of folk-dancing to an even larger portion of the American people than it already has.



## NOTES OF INTEREST

The ASDG is rapidly filling a seemingly unlimited quota of men for our armed forces. We are sorry to part with them, of course, but we are proud that our Group can supply such alert, intelligent and well coordinated "gents". The Group now has boys scattered about the country, in the East, the Mid-West, the West, and the South. These boys have taken with them their laughter, their love and knowledge of folk lore, and their desire to know more and to pass on that knowledge to others. To our ever-growing roll of honor let us add the names of Murray and Babe who left us this past week to serve their country.

Boys enough for a good "Running Set", Dave, Bob, Willie, Alan, Murray and Babe! But if there is any running, it won't be on your part, we know. Good luck to you all..... and

HURRY BACK

We are sorry to hear of the recent death of the famous American folk artist, Grant Wood. Because of his fine works on the American scene we consider him to have been one of the foremost of contemporary artists. Among the best known of his paintings are the following, "Daughters of Revolution", "American Gothic", "Woman with Plants and "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere".

Mike R. Jr. division

From Jean Thomas comes word of the twelfth annual American Folk Song Festival to be held this June near Ashland, Ky. on the Mayo Trail. The date is June 14th, and Promenade will carry more particulars about this Festival later on.

There are two regularly scheduled radio programs of American folk music which we find very enjoyable. On wednesday afternoons at four, over WNYC, and on Saturday mornings, at ten-fifteen, over WQXR.

YIPPEEeee

The third of the four albums of American folk dances in the Decca series ( our four albums, of course!) has been released. This last is the play-party games, sung by our friend Frank Luther. The booklet has the words of the "songs" and the descriptions of the "games". This album should be of great value to teachers and leaders of groups.